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ABSTRACT

This document justifies U.S. government funding of the Southern Regional Consortium of Colleges of Education (SRCCE) proposal for a Educational Leadership Research and Development Center (ELRDC), reviews the formulation of the research and development agenda, lists the several steps leading to the establishment of the center designated to implement the agenda, and discusses the politics involved with the dispersal of federal grant monies among competitors. The ELRDC was designed to discover problems in American pedagogy rather than seek solutions. Educational researchers would employ state-of-the-art information-gathering techniques. The paper concludes by speculating that application for a grant failed because the federal agency responsible for dispersing the grant monies--the U.S. Department of Education--did not want the proposed ELRDC to embarrass American schooling or itself. (126 references) (JAM)

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RESEARCH MANAGEMENT
THE CASE FOR THE R&D CENTER FOR SCHOOL LEADERSHIP
(ABECEDARIAN VIEWS)*

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RESEARCH MANAGEMENT?
THE CASE OF THE R&D CENTER FOR SCHOOL LEADERSHIP: ABECEDARIAN VIEWS

PART I. THE SCENARIO (From Our Viewpoint)

Introduction

The recent competition for funding of the National R&D Center for School Leadership is an example of R&D management, from formulation of the R&D agenda through several steps leading to the establishment of the Center designated to implement the agenda.

Major steps in the process are as follows:

1. Formulation of R&D agenda.
   Meetings and seminars, Aug-Sept, 1987.

2. Presentation of the R&D agenda.
   Briefing in D.C., 4/15/88. Publication of guidelines.

3. Interpretations of the R&D agenda.
   Proposal preparation/submission (Due 6/10/88)

4. Proposal review.
   Selection of reviewers; instruction to reviewers.

5. Agency review analysis.

6. Funding decision.

7. Center implementation through award instrument.
   Response to non-funded proposers.

In the present case, the first three steps were carried out with no unusual, out-of-the-routine issues or questions arising. However, there is considerable question about the last four steps. It is widely known that there were two review panels, but why there were two is unclear. It has been alleged (although the quality of information available is not good) that internal agency analysis of both the results of the first review panel and the funding recommendation of the staff, led to a discarding of the funding recommendation. This evidently led to the formulation of the second review panel.

On request, proposers are normally provided verbatim, but anonymous, reviews of their respective proposals. In this case the reviews were provided -- but only as carried out by the second review panel. Data and information about the first panel and about the agency review analysis that led to this extraordinary result, are not known to be available.

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3/89

Moreover, the splitting of the Center award into two awards is also extraordinary and raises questions about the match of this result with the original R&D agenda as presented in the proposal guidelines, and with the distribution of points (especially with the subsequent move of some portion of the research from Illinois to another institution).

IN ANY CASE, INASMUCH AS THIS SYMPOSIUM IS INTENDED TO ILLUMINATE ISSUES OF RESEARCH MANAGEMENT THROUGH THE ANALYSIS OF THE ABOVE PROCESS, THERE IS MUCH RICH INFORMATION THAT NEEDS TO BE DEVELOPED.

As representatives of a group not awarded the contract, our inquiries and concerns could easily be considered sour grapes. So be it. On the other hand, unless someone raises questions, releases information, or seeks clarification, many things remain clouded and hidden, only to fester and generate ill will. In this spirit, we have shared -- in the text and appendices -- key elements of the Southern Regional Consortium of Colleges of Education (SRCCE) proposal which was SRCCE's entry into the national R&D Leadership Sweepstakes. The proposal presents ideas that formed the basis for the SRCCE's proposed Education Leadership Research and Development Center (ELRDC). Naturally we were disappointed not to receive the award. We are more disappointed, however, at the vagueness of responses to inquiries for information and the apparent deviations from usual processes. We apologize in advance for any skepticism or cynicism that may CREEP into this discussion.

The ABC's of the SRCCE Proposal for the Federal R&D Center in Education Leadership (The ELRDC Entry)*

Although it is unpleasant not to win, sometimes an opportunity to reflect on the purposes and direction of a particular activity help to clarify the issues involved and to move conceptualization one step forward. Thus, those who developed the Southern Regional Consortium of Colleges of Education (SRCCE) proposal for the Federal Research and Development (R&D) Center in Education Leadership appreciate this opportunity to explain some underlying strategies and assumptions of that proposal. This paper addresses some background factors, some guiding assumptions for the proposal's approach, a brief description of the proposal structure, and includes a general discussion of the proposal. The SRCCE entrant was called the Education Leadership Research and Development Center, or ELRDC.

The SRCCE region contains a large number of major doctoral-degree granting institutions; major, at least, in terms of numbers of programs and students. Those that agreed to participate in the ELRDC are listed in Table 1. The Deans of most of these institutions provided letters of commitment; many committed space, .50 professional staff, reduced overhead on subcontracts, office equipment, and a graduate assistant. Of the proposals submitted, this level of commitment must have been the most substantial. But, in addition, many Deans and Department Chairs also agreed to help put into practice the successful outcomes or products of the ELRDC work.

Strategy

The limited resources available for education leadership R&D and improvement of preparation programs can be used efficiently and effectively when coordination, sharing and cooperation among various institutions and groups are the norm. The ELRDC structure operationalized this philosophy of inclusion and measured growth.

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*The ABC's represent views of of Achilles, Buccino and Carver, the ABECEDARIANS. The References section is really a bibliography. It includes all references from this paper and a long bibliography that was a portion of the ELRDC proposal. The bibliography may benefit others.

TABLE 1

SRCCE-Member Institutions and Others in the SRCCE Region
Planning to Participate in ELRDC

The Consortium membership spans approximately on-half of the nation. The membership includes:

Auburn University	Mississippi State University
University of Alabama	University of Southern Mississippi
University of Alabama at Birmingham	North Carolina State University
University of Arkansas	University of North Carolina
Florida Atlantic University	University of North Carolina at Greensboro
Florida State University	Oklahoma State University
University of Florida	University of Oklahoma
University of Miami	Clemson University
Georgia State University	University of South Carolina
University of Georgia	North Texas State University
University of Kentucky	Texas Southern
University of Louisville	Texas Tech University
Grambling State University	University of Texas at Austin
Louisiana State University	Virginia Commonwealth University
University of New Orleans	Virginia Polytechnic & State University
University of Maryland	West Virginia University
Memphis State University	Texas A&M
University of Tennessee	University of Virginia
Vanderbilt University	

The aggregate enrollment of the SRCCE institutions for 1987-88 is more than 726,000 students. The Consortium through this concentration of students has a substantial impact on the delivery system of American education.

One author (Achilles) believes that the present Federal R&D policy of concentrating on Labs and Centers has done much to destroy graduate education and research and little to improve education. Concentration of R&D funds on salaries in a few institutions to conduct Federal-directed R&D has circumvented peer review, innovative "field-initiated" ideas, graduate assistantships and attention to regional and local needs (See Figure 1). Federal myopia has reduced the number of full-time graduate students and professors engaged in research while glorifying modest efforts at a few institutions. The ELRDC design was counter to the prevailing directions.

An initial ELRDC effort was an "Agenda-Setting Conference" to which would be invited principals from the other proposals. This attempt at inclusion would draw on the expert knowledge of others who had thought seriously enough about the R&D needs of Education Administration to develop proposals. Two reviewers, however, saw this clearly defined step as evidence that ELRDC had no agenda -- in spite of a thorough review of major research needs and a clear research agenda operationalized by Research Agenda study areas (RASAs). Apparently the reviewers were set upon a Center that had all of the answers in advance despite clear statements in the RFP (pp. 3, 5) that the "applicant have procedures to adopt to new situations and make adjustments to address newly arising problems," and that "we do not know nearly enough about how and why school leadership affects the quality and quantity of school work..."

Research has provided some ideas about elements of America's best run companies (Peters and Waterman, 1982). They stay close to the customer and stick to the knitting, among other things. Also, they have a spirit of entrepreneurship and leap before they look. Cuban (1988) noted educators' reluctance to make "second order" changes. The ELRDC offered the government an opportunity to support a Center with a distinctly different concept of "Center" (a major change), based on current, theoretically sound approaches. In this case, the SRCCE proposal would let OERI

demonstrate what it so loudly advocates -- partnerships, innovation, technology, etc. Alas, it was not to be. The last act of a dying organization is to rigidify and rewrite the rule book. (See Berliner and Shavelson's response to Finn's plaint, "What Ails Education Research" in the Educational Researcher, Jan.-Feb., 1988, pp 9-12) At least one OERI accomplishment is noteworthy in the last administration -- the greatest number of suspect competitions! (Note also the Vo-Tec Center, Center for Technology.)

Basis for the Consortial Approach and Synopsis of the SRCCE Area's History of Cooperation

The ELRDC offered a "Center" concept uniquely suited to the RFP's stated mission and objectives. The ELRDC design responded to explicit statements of purpose in the SRCCE By-Laws, the history of cooperation within the SRCCE region, and the RFP's stated purposes. First some history.

In 1948 the Kellogg Foundation began its interest in and support of education administration and hosted the Second Annual National Conference of Professors of Educational Administration (NCPEA) at Battle Creek, Michigan, where the Cooperative Program in Educational Administration (CPEA) had its genesis. In 1950 several states joined in a Kellogg-sponsored effort known as the Southern States Cooperative Program in Educational Administration (SSCPEA). This productive consortium helped higher education in the region provide leadership for desegregation efforts and preparation of Black administrators. Activities included special programs in concert with the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB), studies on community power and leadership, and work on administrator competencies (Blackmon, 1986).

Although SSCPEA's formal structure faded with the loss of grant support, the Southern Regional Council on Educational Administration (SRCEA) became a focus for leadership in education

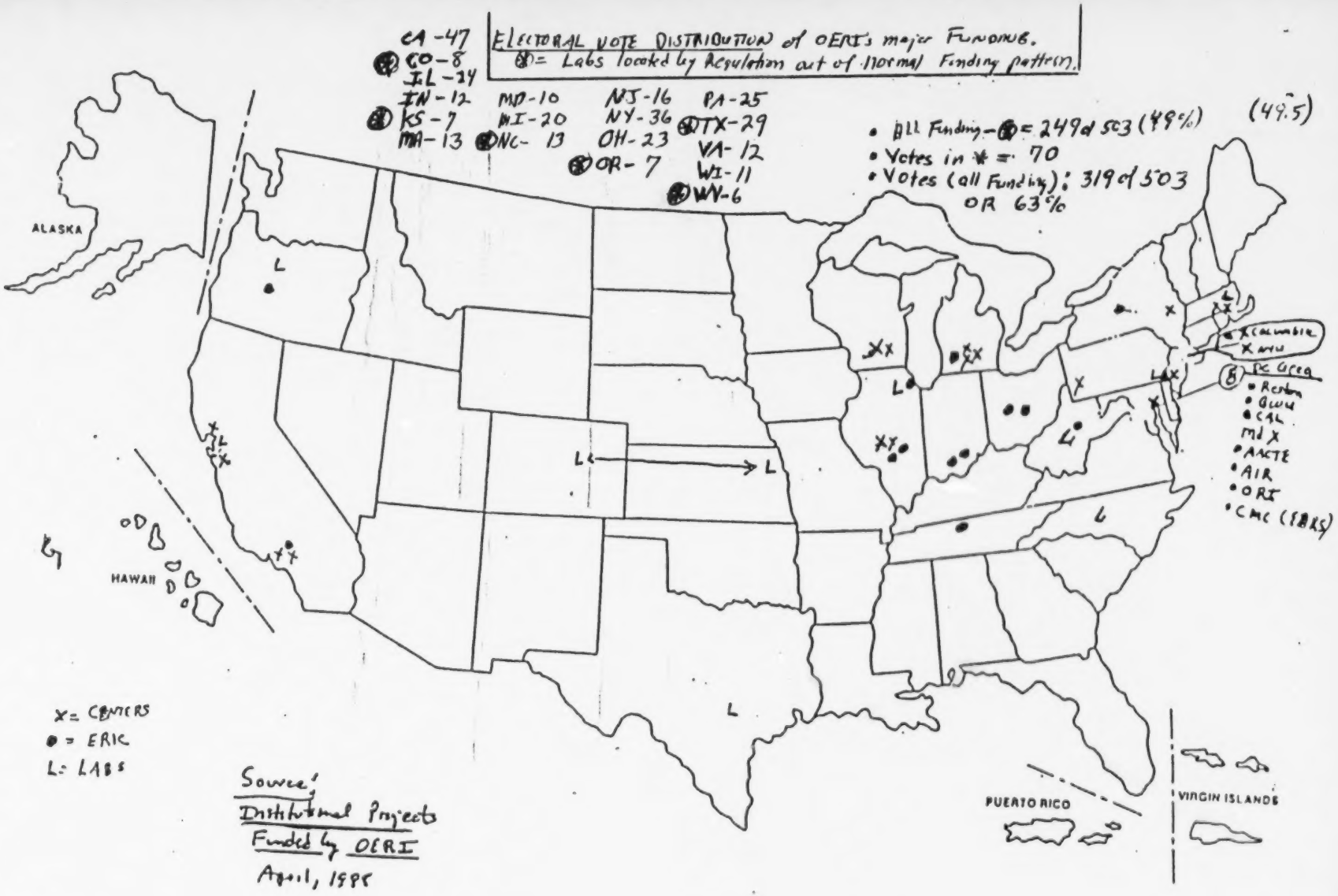

Figure 4. Distribution of major OERI-funded Centers/Labs/ERIC prior to Education Leadership competition (OERI, 1988).

administration in the region. The SRCEA, the only formal regional organization remaining from the original Kellogg-sponsored programs, continues to provide a forum for education administration. SSCPEA and SRCEA activities, coupled with the Southern States Work Conferences and the SREB, provide evidence that cooperative and consortial activities not only work in the SRCCE region, but have substantial residual benefits and longevity. For example, the Truman Pierce Center at Auburn University is a direct descendant of the SSCPEA (Pierce, 1983).

The ELRDC built on this proven base of cooperation and support, offering the potential for an impact on the improvement of education leadership in a way unavailable to traditional centers. This base offered a unique opportunity for the Federal Government to build upon and extend an operating system. With its usual wisdom, the Federal Government chose to reject the "grass roots" system and impose another structure that, in all probability, will be far easier for the government to control. (The R&D Center was a cooperative agreement, not a contract.)

Assumptions Underlying the SRCCE Proposal's Main Focus (See Appendix A for additional detail)

The SRCCE proposal was predicated on assumptions and designed to meet current serious criticisms apparent in the education change, education research, and education administration literature. Some criticisms have been recent, beginning just prior to the interest in the R&D Center and continuing to the present (note Guthrie & Clifford, 1989; Thomson, 1989). One current interest is to consider preparation of leaders for education in the "professional" model rather than following the traditional "liberal arts" model (Guthrie & Clifford, 1989; Griffiths, et al, 1988; Thomson, 1989; among others). The ELRDC built upon a professional-school model with a focus on the study of the practice of administration and close ties to local schools. The ELRDC was a "blue-collar" effort in that it proposed to work in the trenches with school systems. Specifically, the ELRDC proposed a strategy whereby a portion of the problems that ELRDC staff would address would come from an intake network of practitioners. These problems would be determined in the context of the professional practice of education administration in actual school settings.

The ELRDC was built on the idea that change will more likely occur when there is involvement of those who have a stake in the change. Thus, the ELRDC had a broad-base of cooperation and provided strategies for groups to meet and to develop and refine research agendas. The ELRDC provided two important mechanisms: 1) a method systematically to survey problems in the field and 2) a structure to field test and then implement successful ELRDC products.

The ELRDC responded to the fact that most research in education leadership is conducted by doctoral students, and that many professors who direct doctoral students are themselves not particularly well schooled in research strategies. Thus, the ELRDC included procedures for helping to improve the research skills of practicing professors, and especially those likely to direct future doctoral research. The ELRDC made provisions for experts (inside and outside of Education Administration) to design important research studies, and concurrently teach professors and students about improved research processes. There were plans to get results into preparation programs for Education Administration (RFP, p 6).

The ELRDC promulgated the notion that one way to improve research fairly quickly was to build on successful research agendas currently underway throughout the region and in the nation, and by bringing together researchers interested in the same general topics, to expand the probabilities that the research would get completed fairly quickly and have broad-scale impacts. It is not unreasonable to assume that researchers in more places than one are conducting research on the same or similar topics. (Site-based management is one example.)

The ELRDC incorporated the idea that new things are more likely to occur within a region with a history of cooperation and a general trust built up over years. Thus, the ELRDC would initiate its

cooperation (note the prior section) and then would expand to key researchers working on major topics of interest elsewhere (e.g., the ideas from Arizona State University). In this way, the research agenda would start with activities currently underway by bringing together researchers of common interest, and have a fairly quick "pay-off," -- something required in the RFP (p. 7).

The ELRDC was built on the notion that to move some concept forward, those promoting that concept should themselves demonstrate the concept's efficacy. Thus, the ELRDC as a "Center" was not a place, but rather a concept -- to demonstrate that the new technologies do not require the same proximity that history has enjoyed in the past. The ELRDC had built-in provisions for using technology to link researchers, believing that those researchers would be most "comfortable" and therefore productive in their "home" sites where they already had facilities, understood the research capabilities (library, computers, personnel) and could employ them effectively and efficiently. The ELRDC proposers knew that the needed personnel did not currently reside in one or two institutions, for if so, a Center in the traditional sense would already exist. Certainly, in a new competition the government would not fund what already existed.

The SRCCE writers recognized, through careful analysis of prior federal grants in education and research and development, that the SRCCE probability of success was not particularly high given the geographic location of SRCCE institutions in states generally not among the OERI "elite"(Figure 1, p.5). In fact, when considering the dispersion of electoral votes, power in the Senate Education and Labor Committee and an election year the SRCCE writers nearly chose not to write a proposal. (Others in the States with no education knowledge, leadership or brains as noted in Figure 1 may also wish to be wary of "competitions.") (Has anyone analyzed these same states to see where there are balanced budgets?) Nevertheless, the ELRDC plan recognized the many new ideas emanating from the region which it served, and especially from the political emphasis provided the education reform movement by Governors and Legislators of the southeast. Certainly the Leadership R&D Center competition has continued the image that there is a dearth of competent brainpower in the U.S. southeast (and other low-electoral vote states).

Structure

The ELRDC structure was a considerable departure from the structure traditionally espoused by the generally unsuccessful education R&D superstructure. (When did this Center/Lab structure begin? Let's discuss the recent glowing reports about education.) The ELRDC would be a concept, not a place. It relied on practitioners and on grass roots ideas. It diminished the "top down" Federal role of developing expensive new superstructures. It would rely on a dispersed workplace tied by technology and media, and would try to demonstrate the concepts which it espoused. Indeed, the ELRDC would be an attempt to live the very ideas and ideals which the federal government, the research literature, and others suggest are not only important today but will be the guiding directions of the future. (Who tells education to use technology and continues to be notably unsuccessful in getting teachers to use ERIC?) In this sense, the ELRDC was doomed to failure, for it was a step away from the elitist, liberal arts model which has provided such resounding mediocrity in the past (Guthrie & Clifford, 1989; Judge, 1982; and common sense). Although housed at a single institution, the work and workers would be connected by common interest, computers, other media, and occasional face-to-face meetings.

One important element of the structure and work flow of the ELRDC was that the main ideas were built within a change process framework. (The ELRDC was built upon a conceptual framework supported by research -- it was doomed from the start!) The framework (see Figure 2) moved logically from problem identification through dissemination and use of the R&D products. This conscious construction of major R&D work upon prior R&D outcomes probably helped defeat the SRCCE entry. In fact, the reviewers, blissfully unaware of the research, complained that ELRDC did not have a "product champion." Of course, there is not yet a product to champion. In fact, ELRDC had several potential "champions." The first was its very structure. Others were the Deans who

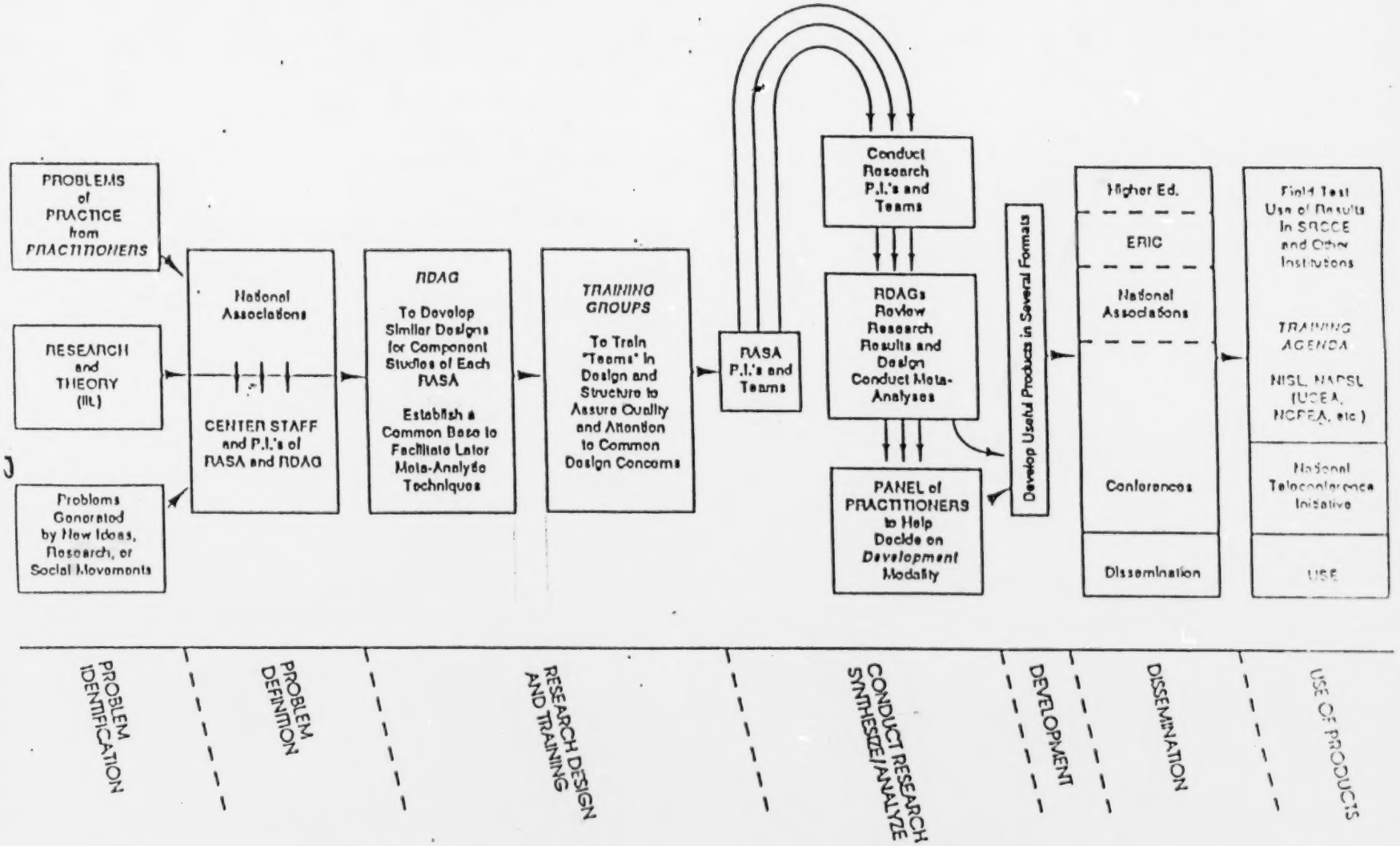
PROBLEMS of PRACTICE from PRACTITIONERS
RESEARCH and THEORY (ILI)
Problems Generated by New Ideas, Research, or Social Movements
National Associations
CENTER STAFF and P.I.'s of RASA and RDAG
RDAG
To Develop Similar Designs for Component Studies of Each RASA
Establish a Common Base to Facilitate Later Meta-Analyte Techniques
TRAINING GROUPS
To Train "Teams" in Design and Structure to Assure Quality and Attention to Common Design Concerns
RASA P.I.'s and Teams
Conduct Research P.I.'s and Teams
RDAGs Review Research Results and Design Conduct Meta-Analyses
PANEL of PRACTITIONERS to Help Decide on Development Modality
Develop Useful Products in Several Formats
Higher Ed.
ERIC
National Associations
Conferences
Dissemination
Field Test Use of Results in SROCE and Other Institutions
TRAINING AGENDA
NISL, NADSL (UCEA, NCREA, etc.)
National Teleconference Initiative
USE
PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION
PROBLEM DEFINITION
RESEARCH DESIGN AND TRAINING
CONDUCT RESEARCH SYNTHESIZE/ANALYZE
DEVELOPMENT
DISSEMINATION
USE OF PRODUCTS

Figure 2. Structure and framework of ELRDC, showing correspondence of ELRDC efforts and proven elements of change processes.

committed to use ELRDC's successful products. (Did the reviewers have trouble in elementary reading or did they neglect to read letters in the appendices?)

Although some ELRDC effort was to be directed elsewhere (such as the study of the superintendent as CEO in public and private schools as suggested by Bridges, 1982), much ELRDC early work would have emphasized school-level administration and organization (Duke, 1986). This was required by the RFP (pp. 6-7).Knowledge of school and classroom organizational processes has grown substantially in recent years. Barr and Dreeben (1983) note that routine (school) administrative decisions such as scheduling and allocating resources and personnel affect student outcomes (Pajak, 1987). Typically, research by teacher educators has focused on classroom structures and processes while research in education administration has centered on organizational and environmental structures and processes. However, studies of relationships between the two are scant. Consequently, the effects of school-based leadership context on classroom context, particularly on teaching and learning have been relatively ignored as a central topic of direct empirical investigation (McNeil, 1986). It is "one of those black boxes that are ubiquitous in education" (U.S. Department of Education, 1988, p. 5). Erickson (1979) noted that careful research on "school effects" had the potential to depart "from the black box tradition that has moved [education administration] substantially nowhere" (p. 10). The ELRDC was organized to develop work and research agendas that would examine systematically the effects of school-based leadership context on classroom context and outcomes. This seemed required by the RFP (pp. 1-8).

The ELRDC planned to achieve its mission through a unified work plan and work agendas. The "infrastructure" for ELRDC success was designed to be: 1) the strength and unique commitment of the SRCCE consortium, 2) the concept of inclusion, and 3) the simultaneous "loose-tight" coupling of ELRDC design. Major ELRDC work was arranged into Work Agendas. They were:

- Refining the ELRDC Mission and Program Direction. (Planning and Direction). This would foster inclusion.
- Leadership Contexts and Education Outcomes.
- Strategies for Using Practictioners to Help Define and Refine Problems that Require Attention (From Practitioner Viewpoints).
- Preparation Programs; Improvement of Research Processes and Curricula (Long-term improvement on Ed. Admin. research).
- Research Agenda Study Areas (RASAs). These allowed new research areas to enter the ELRDC Work Agenda format. (Flexibility)
- Dissemination. (Including efforts at getting new ideas into practice).

Discussion and Conclusion

Strong beliefs and biases often hinder a glorious vista of all of the alternatives. For some time, several of those who worked on the development of the ELRDC strongly believed some notions unrecognized or unimplemented in education. In some circles this would be called Vision. The Tunnel Vision of reviewers who saw only Center-as-Elite-Place dimmed the other Vision. Part II and Appendix B include more details.

Concepts generated by Paul Mort at Columbia Teachers College and Dexter Simpson at Harvard are key elements which support the school study and development councils throughout the United States. The Study Council notion embodies cooperation and collegiality and employs Mort's concept of "pooling and sharing." The ELRDC also incorporated some strengths and outcomes from the old Kellogg grants, the Cooperative Projects in Educational Administration (CPEA) and the scions of that movement. (Note that study councils withstood the Federal "blitz" of Title III "Supplemental Centers," NDEA's Regional Instructional Media Centers (RIMC's) and even now, the Labs. Nevertheless, the Federal government continues to build its own superstructures -- in the face of its own calls for decentralization, restructuring and site-based efficiencies.) John Dewey told us

many years ago that "the way in which the problem is conceived decides what specific suggestions are entertained and which are dismissed; what data are selected and which rejected; it is the criterion for relevance and irrelevancy of hypothesis and conceptual structures" (Dewey, 1938. Logic: The Theory of Inquiry, p. 138). Thus, those involved with ELRDC conceived of the problems expressed in the R&D RFP in one way and followed a course which ended up with unsatisfactory results. The ELRDC structure even included this problem-perception bias. The ELRDC incorporated provisions for identifying new problems as they arose and injecting those problems directly into the work of the ELRDC by a mechanism for adding new Research Agenda Study Areas (RASAs). Further, the ELRDC proposed to include practitioners in meaningful ways -- an anathema to elite research ideologies.

The ELRDC's RASAs would function in a problem-finding mode as well as in a problem-solving mode. They were designed to let education researchers discover problems rather than seek solutions to presented problems (the distinction is that of Getzels, 1979, p. 8). Getzels notes that in presented problem situations the problem is given to the problem solver and the problem solver simply seeks a solution which is already pretty well known. This is the characteristic of many tests in schools today and a problem harassing much of the education reform as it has been implemented (note Reich, 1989; Wasserman, 1989; and others). Business leaders and politicians prefer this bias for they are then in the catbird seat of identifying the problems for educators to research. Education's research needs to move to Getzels' discovered problem situation (see Figure 3). In this situation a problem exists but it is formulated by the problem solver and not by someone else. This idea continues to be antithetical to the approaches commonly followed in the recent education reform issues. (External forces telling educators what to do. The "reform" of stricter school requirements for students may have fueled a dropout surge.) The discovered problem does not have a known formulation or method of solution; its refinement and solution require professional attention. The continuing generation of problems as proposed in the ELRDC is not a question of response to external forces and to problems identified by others, but a genuine effort to identify and then solve problems pertinent to a particular issue or concern -- in this case education research on education leadership. This step forward calls for a break in tradition. If we want solutions never before found, we must try approaches never before tried. The ELRDC, alas, tried to establish a way to do this.

If the problem really was just where to locate another Federal R&D Center, it probably was easily and well resolved by the activities we described here. (See also Figure 1, p. 5.) If the problem were how do we improve research and development in education leadership, or further, how do we get research and development into the hands of practitioners, history tells that the prior structures designed for the R&D Centers have not been glaringly successful. Maybe we should give it one more try. We all have known a teacher who couldn't get a point across, so that teacher repeated the same thing, but only in a louder voice.

Perhaps the "Feds" didn't want another embarrassment. The minimally funded National Diffusion Network (NDN) is a "producer-driven" dissemination and utilization system that continuously far outstrips its "user-driven," nearly professor-only, high-cost compatriot, ERIC. While ERIC needs continuous intravenous feeding, increasing budgets, and new RFP's to determine how ERIC might be useful, NDN marches on -- with its budget of about 10 million (no increase to speak of in 10 years) -- by attending to practitioners. (The NDN was so successful, in fact, that last year OERI insiders tried to remove its director!) Although the comparison is not exact, the OERI may have learned from the successful, dispersed NDN that OERI can't call the shots in successful operations without drawing criticism (Note the fiasco over the "Facing History in Ourselves" program). Calling a second review panel assuredly is not expensive if the practitioner can continue to be snubbed.

1. PRESENTED PROBLEM SITUATIONS. The problem is given to the problem-solver. It probably has a known formulation, known method of solution, and known answer. The problem is proposed by someone else and given to the problem solver (This is the situation most prevalent in schools. Think of all of your classes and subjects. Given that the side of a square is four feet, what is the area?)

2. DISCOVERED PROBLEM SITUATIONS. The problem exists, but is formulated by the problem solver, not by someone else. It may not have a known formulation, known method of solution or a known solution. (Why do children, at about grade 3 or 4, begin to seem to dislike school when almost all children are initially eager to attend school? Is this an American education phenomenon, or does it exist in other cultures?)

3. CREATED PROBLEM SITUATIONS. No problem is evident until someone creates or invents it. An artist creates a painting. A poet expresses beauty through an ode. An advertising artist may be given a problem--design an illustration for an advertisement. A fine artist starts with a blank canvas and proceeds to create a problem which the same artist then moves to solve. (Getzels, 1979: 11).

Figure 3. The Problem of the Problem. Material from Getzels, J. (1979). Problem finding and research in educational administration. In C.L. Immegart and W.L. Boyd (Eds.), Problem finding in educational administration. Lexington, MA: D.C. Heath, 5-22.

Nevertheless, we now have another Federal R&D Center which fits the Federal R&D concept and mode of "Center." It will lead by being one of the "Cooperative Agreement" pack. Much like the Federal concept in ERIC, it's not so much a question of what should we do, as a question of how do we fix what we have.

The cloud remains. Was this competition and its results the finnishing touch? It is, of course, hard for a loser to accept that it was a fair loss -- especially when the details have not been released. The above ERIC-NDN scenario offers one palliative.

PART II. SOME AFTERSHOCKS

Robert W. Service said it first. His poem, "The Cremation of Sam McGee" may not be the best way to describe the R&D "Leadership" Center Competition, but it provides a good starting point. ("The Twilight Zone", Hitchcock Presents, etc. were also nominated.) Some of us wonder if the scenario was (Apologies to Service if this is a Disservice):

The Cremation of SRCCE*

There are strange things done till the grantings won
By the men who moil for gold;
...O ERI trails have their secret tales**
That would make your blood run cold;...
...Now a promise made is a debt unpaid...

As far as we can tell there were two review panels for the five proposals. Although we have actively sought them, we have been unable to obtain from OERI the reviewers' comments from the first panel. We have hesitated to invoke political interference or The Freedom of Information Act. It was supposed to be a peer review of high order. (But then, one recalls two Voc-Tech Center competitions and the Technology Center issue.) We did receive the second panel's review sheets. A summary of some of the results appears in Table 2. If the second panel had this much lack of consensus on just one proposal, it is no wonder that the Federal Agency does not wish to share the first panel's results. In the second review, the SRCCE proposal apparently had five reviewers. Reviewer's scores (of 100) ranged from 24 to 96! All of the low scores had only one column of points; the high scores had two columns of scores -- the second adjusted downward considerably (e.g., 50 to 44, 96 to 70). A facsimile of the actual cover sheet of the review forms appears on page B-1. Note that there were three options for reviewers to check: acceptable for finding, acceptable (with reservations), and not acceptable. All five SRCCE reviews were "not acceptable," including the 96! The review that had a "final" score of 74 (preliminary scores not legible) had originally been marked "acceptable," but that was changed to "not acceptable." One only wonders what that was if a 96 is unacceptable!

At least two of the five reviewers seemed to have their own agendas. In spite of evidence that it might be useful to test a new idea or concept of Center (not the notion of a few scholars working in

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*Naturally we were disappointed in the outcome of the competition. Yet, unless someone raises some questions, everyone will assume that there were none. We opt for whine from sour grapes to no whine at all.

**This competition took two separate panels. No reviews from the first have yet been supplied to SRCCE requests.

TABLE 2
SECOND PANEL REVIEWERS' SCORES FOR 1988 SRCCE PROPOSAL
FOR OERI-SPONSORED R&D CENTER FOR EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

Reviewers/Points: Preliminary (Pre) and Final (Fin)

	Poss-ible	(Pre)	(Fin)	(Pre)	?	(Pre)	(Fin)	(Pre)	(Fin)	(Pre)	(Fin)
Mission/Strategy	20	5	5	5		*	10	15		20	15
Instit. Capacity	15	4	4	5			5	10		13	13
Plan of Operation	15	1	1	5			5	10		13	13
Tech. Soundness	25	1	1	5			10	18		25	10
Quality of Key Personnel	15	6	6	5			10	12		15	10
Budget/Cost Effect.	5	4	4	0			2	4		5	4
Evaluation Plan	5	3	3	4			2	5		5	5
TOTAL**	100	24	24[a]	29	?[a]	50	44[a]	74		96	70

*Some scores were not legible on the copy sent to SRCCE, or were not listed.

** Some comments seemed to be for another proposal (see text) and some were clearly changed to coincide with the lowered scores.

[a] The principal SRCCE proposal author, with over 190 successful proposals for funding, was dismayed by these scores. Surely, one gets 20-25 points just for doing a proposal; another few for a good literature review (we've included the references in case anyone needs a good bibliography); and a couple points for a cadre of nationally known researchers who agreed to work on this project! And the commitment? The promise of support?

isolation at one, or two, institutions of higher eduction generally located in places where school excellence may be over-represented), these reviewers commented that the SRCCE proposal did not propose a "true" or "real" Center. Perhaps these reviewers don't know about advances in communications and technology. (Is "Mission Control" at Cape Kennedy? Where do the shuttles LAND?) (Appendix B contains the verbatim reports of two reviewers who provided the most negative reviews. The papers have some notations in pen that were made by one of the SRCCE proposal writers.) The typed text is as delivered -- unedited and unexpurgated -- by OERI to SRCCE's request for feedback. One must presume that the comments are those provided by the reviewers. Imagine only one of 25 points on technical soundness. The text of the reviews is informative. We encourage readers to peruse Appendix B carefully.

Two reviewers saw the SRCCE interest in talking with the developers of the other R&D Center proposals as de facto proof that SRCCE did not have a research agenda. In fact, the request for an "Agenda-Setting Conference" clearly noted the advisability of involving in SRCCE efforts those few others in the Education Administration field who had thought enough about the field to develop proposals. Interesting mind set. Contradictions abound. Indeed, other successful OERI center proposals suggested just such a strategy and it was seen as a strength in a proposal at a prestigous institution.

We have included the complete comments of two reviewers of the SRCCE proposal in Appendix B. Those who have a copy of the SRCCE proposal -- we made many copies available -- might wish to compare the comments with the proposal. Were they reading the SRCCE proposal? Did their predetermined notion of Center cause such biases that their reviews should have been discarded? Look carefully at the personnel section and determine if there are no notable researchers/scholars represented. Are the identified researchers that disreputable? How did SRCCE involve "The Field" as required in the RFP? Can a few people working in isolation in some ivory tower overcome this Brobdignagian problem? Is it any wonder that the NSF budget increases even as OERI programs and budgets falter?

We'll try to conclude this discourse with the same clarity that we see in the OERI competion and response for information. High-ranking agents of the public domain have evaded clear answers, have avoided responding to requests for information and, most importantly, have fueled more of the same -- a typical eduction response that they, no doubt, will later blame on the very system that they have "lead" by the traditional approach while advocating innovation. Alas. There are some unanswered questions.

QUESTIONS REMAIN...

There are some unanswered questions. ("O ERI trails have their secret tales") We have included a few here. Some of the more impertinent ones we have avoided raising here, among peers. Some impertinent questions probably should be raised with those who managed the competition and those who reviewed the proposals for this competition. Perhaps someone would add answers...

With all of the OERI "fuss" about practice (in RFP and the OERI Seminars), how well was "practice" represented among the five reviewers of the second panel?

Why no real answers from OERI to SRCCE questions?

What was the outcome of the first panel's review? Why was there a need for a second panel?

Did the reviewers have a sufficient grasp of personnel in the field to know anything about the research backgrounds/results of the staffs as proposed?

Why were these scores accepted with the tremendous discrepancy (24-96) obvious on at least one proposal?

Was the concept of a dispersed center (and the idea to employ and demonstrate innovative communication/technology/approaches) rejected out of hand? (Real irony here!) Was the rejection built into the instructions to the reviewers?

Why were all final high scores for SRCCE adjusted down(?)? This almost defies odds without specific instructions, especially since low scores were not touched.

With all of the fuss about cooperation, the field, practice, etc., doesn't anyone see anything strange about awarding half of the funds to an individual (who later moved from the original institution)? Was there another review of Institution Capacity (15 points) with the move? How did one person receive more points for Quality of Key Personnel (15) than the other proposals? (This is not meant to take anything away from an individual, but the SRCCE proposal had several prominent researchers. We bet that the Utah proposal did, too!)

Etc?

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APPENDIX A
DETAIL OF CURRENT ISSUES IMPEDING
EDUCATION ADMINISTRATION

Some Weaknesses in Previous Education Administration Research and Preparation

Griffiths (1988) noted that a major study of education administration professors in 1973 found a perplexing complacency and a poor intellectual climate in departments in the face of many problems of preparation programs (p. 20). Today this complacency still exists (McCarthy, et al., 1988) and the field seems 1) even less able to respond to the need for change and 2) determined to continue to rely on the past as a basis for the future.

Erickson (1979) spoke to the "State of the Art" of research in education administration and noted the disjointed, amorphous and poorly focused research in this field (pp. 9-10).

> My task is to assess the "state of the art" in a research domain labeled "educational administration." But the phrase "educational administration" does not accurately indicate what area of inquiry I should assess. I have never encountered a satisfying discussion of the parameters of that field. In practical terms, the field consists of whatever scholars associated with university programs in "educational administration" consider relevant. It is, to say the least, amorphous.
>
> ...Charters speaks, not of work precise, reproducible, and theoretically sound, but of "acres of disjointed, theoretically barren, non-cumulative, and downright shoddy studies that ...[weave] no strands or themes." He laments "endless, witless administrations of the LBDQ, OCDQ, POS, ABC, and XYZ scales to haphazard collections of teachers and administrators. Analyzing student dissertations in departments of educational administration, Haller ends up not a great deal more ecstatic. McNamara demonstrates that many articles in Educational Administration Quarterly are distinguished by naive use of statistics.

Griffiths (1988) recalled that in their 1973 study, Campbell and Newell expressed concern over the dismal quantity and quality of research in education administration and that this condition has not appreciably improved (p. 21).

Boyan (1981) and others noted that most (80%) research in education administration was conducted by graduate students. Haller (1979) noted that doctoral students rely heavily on questionnaires. In Haller's study, fully 80% of doctoral studies were done with questionnaires; 53% used self-constructed and 28% used published questionnaires. Few education administration professors actually do research, but many supervise research. Since this scenario does not seem ready to change, one emphasis should help improve research in education administration, and strengthen processes for future research.

Some have criticized education administration research for inattention to the field and the administration of schools. Practitioners believe that preparation programs have lost touch with the requirements of administering schools (Pitner, 1982; Lucas, et al., 1988; Thomson, 1989; Guthrie and Clifford, 1989). Communication between researchers and the field has suffered. One emphasis should coordinate research with problems of the field through responsible involvement of practitioners and the use of multi-disciplinary teams to 1) refine problems of practice into research agendas, 2) help to define rigorous methodology and design, 3) assist in analysis, 4) provide ideas about how research results relate to specific disciplines and other fields, and 5) identify effective development steps and dissemination strategies for research results.

Education's critics often suggest that educators adopt or adapt practices and models from other social institutions. Although their practices and principles may adjust to education's needs, administration in other institutions may be different from administration of schools in terms of purpose, context and outcomes, success measures, etc. Administration of education involves professionals who work in the public sector with "raw material" over which they have little quality control. Outcome measures of industry are products and profits while education's are knowledge, values, and attitudes. (If the stock market were an indicator of business success -- as student test scores have become an indicator for education -- the October, 1987 decline would suggest that administration in other sectors is not without some problems.) Although purposes and outcome measures are different, nevertheless, other institutions may have important administration concepts that can assist in the administration of schools. Some effort was reserved to study if and how practices from other institutions might contribute to improved education outcomes. What are important differences or similarities between the school superintendent and the private-sector Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and/or private school head?

Preparation programs for education leaders have been criticized (e.g., NCEEA, 1987; Pitner, 1982; Peterson and Finn, 1985: Achilles, 1984a, 1984b, 1985, 1988, etc.). According to Griffiths (1988) "Most programs for training school administrators range in quality from embarrassing to disastrous" (p. 6). There is considerable emphasis for change in how we prepare school administrators. Some have suggested different conceptualizations of and approaches to preparation programs (e.g., NCEEA, 1987; Duke, 1986 and 1988; Murphy and Hallinger, 1987a; Achilles, 1987 and 1988; Achilles and Hughes, 1972). The National Commission on Excellence in Educational Administration (NCEEA), recommended a "professional" model for preparing education administrators, including cooperation with "the field." Although this change may be overdue, there is little systematic data supporting specifics of the need for change, and few studies of preparation program quality of efficacy. <u>One major longitudinal thrust should examine preparation of education leaders</u>.

Changes in research and in preparation programs will require an important cooperative role between/among various "actors" in the web of education. The study of problems of practice should help refine preparation programs. The concept of "what works" should not be missed. Some excellent schools are showing that there <u>can</u> be school excellence. These schools should be studied to determine <u>how</u> administrators implement school improvement ideas. This argues for attention to communication and change processes as one way to understand how change occurs and becomes part of the school community.

Little is know about how those in schools organize and use available information, or how this information and decisions based upon it influence teaching and learning. If we are to understand this process, and then manipulate selected variables, we should learn more about what leads to school outcomes (teaching and learning).

<u>Gender issues</u> in administration demand attention. Griffiths (1988) noted: "Enrollment of women in educational administration programs nation-wide is approaching 50 percent. The next job is to get them appointed to principalships and superintendencies. The easiest, quickest, and surest way to improve the quality of educational administration is to appoint more women" (p. 13). Duke (1986) noted: "Lightfoot (1983) comments on masculine and feminine qualities of leadership among high school principals. She notes that a feminine model of leadership finds leaders expressing a need for partnership and nurturance. Furthermore, relationships and affiliations come to be regarded as central dimensions of the exercise of power" (p. 17). The impressive work of Shakeshaft (1987, 1988), and research by McCarthy et al. (1988) and Pounder (1988) shows the importance of understanding the gender implications for education leadership. If school boards hire prepared female administrators, what changes can we expect

in how schools are administered? As women move into the professoriate, what changes will occur there? McCarthy et al. (1988) noted (p. 95):

> As female representation increases, greater diversity within the educational administration professoriate can be expected. The nature of preparation programs and administrative practice should change in several ways. Women are more research-oriented, less satisfied with the status quo, more sensitive to the interpersonal dimensions of the work environment, and more likely to form collegial networks beyond their own universities. After reviewing the literature on effective learning environments and gender differences, Shakeshaft (1987) concluded:
>
> > Women [have] clear educational goals, supported by a value system which stresses service, caring, and relationships. Women are focused upon instructional and educational issues... [Their] communication and decision making styles stress cooperation and help to facilitate a translation of their educational visions into actions. Women monitor and intervene more than men, they evaluate student progress more often, and ...[they] demonstrate, more often than men, the kinds of behavior that promote achievement and learning as well as high morale and commitment... (p. 200).

Demographics pose interesting education leadership issues (Hodgkinson, 1985). Many schools in the near future will be primarily populated by non-Anglos. Teen pregnancy is increasing. What do these issues mean for administration of schools? What will administrators need to know to work effectively in "majority minority" schools to obtain desired pupil outcomes?

An interesting, but unproductive and longstanding debate has raged about relative merits of leadership and management. (The Application for this R&D Center competition was noteworthy in its pursuit of this barren issue.) Is the principal a leader or a manager? Murphy, Hallinger and Mitman (1983) count among the research problems in education leadership 1) misconceptions about management and 2) misconceptions about leadership. Management and leadership are often viewed as "ends" of one continuum. "New effectiveness activities are leadership, while unpopular practices are sorted into the management bin" (p. 299). A more useful concept may be to view administration as involving both management and leadership. The craft of the artful blending of management and leadership may be the science that helps an administrator succeed within a given context.

In review of research on education administration from 1967-1980, Bridges (1982) noted that "the more things change, the more they remain the same" (p. 24). Bridges' review notes over-used areas of research and identifies gaps in the research base such as the impact of the superintendent as the CEO, study of private school chiefs (see also Chubb and Moe, 1987, and Coleman and Hoffer, 1987) and the need for clarity and diversity in study of impacts or school outcomes. Bridges (1982) and others (e.g., Haller, 1979; Haller and Knapp, 1985; Knapp, 1982) have decried weak research designs, simplistic analyses and use of dubious questionnaires in research in this field. Other criticisms include: No programmatic research thrust, ad hoc efforts rather than building a knowledge base, little practical utility. Bridges advocates integrative reviews and meta-analytic approaches to organizing education administration's research base. "If individual researchers are not using their own research as vehicles for building a knowledge base about school administrators, reviewers must assume the responsibility for integrating knowledge from a set of disparate studies" (p. 25).

But perhaps the worst criticism is "the more things change, the more they remain the same." This calls for a concept of Center that is different -- one that provides new approaches and includes enough commitment and cooperation to study problems AND create change. Table 1

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

summarizes major criticisms of research in education administration and lists some activities and structures to avoid or to remedy the criticisms.

TABLE 1
Criticisms and Concerns about Research in Education Administration
and Suggested Steps to Avoid or Remedy Them

Criticisms/Concerns about Research in Ed. Admin.	Steps to Avoid or Remedy Criticisms
Research has little practical utility; Inattention to problems of schools; Practitioners don't use results (such as they are).	"Problems of Practice" focus; Use of results by preparation programs; Practitioner research involvement; Conferences; Improved R&D training.
Poor research designs, over-use of questionnaires, lack of R&D focus.	Experienced Principal Investigators (PIs) could provide seminars on varied research methods; More full-time "apprenticeships."
Poor research skills; Few professors actually do research.	Training; Skilled PIs; Teams to conduct studies.
Research is ad hoc with no attention to integration of results into theory or into a model to advance later research; Poor concepts of research on administration (vs. on administrators, etc).	Design (a priori) studies amenable to comparisons and meta-analytic approaches; Research emphases developed in accord with organizing frameworks, e.g., Leadership Contexts/Education Outcomes," or ideas expressed by Haller and Knapp (1985).
The systematic data base for education administration is not substantial (N.B., Bok, 1987).	Organizing framework; Coordinated efforts; "Leadership" Contexts/Education Outcomes" focus. Professors should read Handbook (Boyan, 1988) and add to the database with series of studies.
Research lacks vision and neglects impending problems and concerns. Good ideas and substantial research are not the norm.	Focus on gender, demographics, and new or furture emphases; Think tank and practitioner involvement to find problems (Problems of practice).
Preparation programs are not adequate: poor models, criteria, standards, content, etc. Little research emphasis in preparation programs.	Research focus on preparation programs, including models -- model building, pilot-test and analysis of models, research of results.
Insularity. Inattention to advances in other field; inattention to findings in other education administration studies.	Think tank; involve representatives of other disciplines. Professors should read in the research journals! (McCarthy, et al., 1988, esp. pp. 66-67)

OFFICE OF RESEARCH
OFFICE OF EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND IMPROVEMENT
TECHNICAL REVIEW FORM
RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT CENTERS PROGRAM
SCHOOL LEADERSHIP CENTER
(CFDA ANNOUNCEMENT NO. 84.117C-2)

APPLICANT: Southern Regional Consortium of Colleges of Education/U. Georgia

REVIEWER: _____ DATE: 9/21/88

CRITERIA: Institutional Operations (34 CFR 708.11)

EVALUATION FORM

CRITERIA	MAXIMUM SCORE	POINTS AWARDED PRELIM.	FINAL
1. Mission and Strategy	20	5	5
2. Institutional Capacity	15	4	4
3. Plan of Operation	15	1	1
4. Technical Soundness	25	1	1
5. Quality of Key Personnel	15	~~5~~ 6	6
6. Budget and Cost Effectiveness	5	4	4
7. Evaluation Plan	5	3	3
TOTAL	100	~~23~~ 24	24

_____ ACCEPTABLE FOR FUNDING

_____ ACCEPTABLE FOR FUNDING WITH RESERVATIONS

✓ NOT ACCEPTABLE FOR FUNDING

_____
Reviewer Signature

B-1

CRITERIA

Criterion 1. Mission and Strategy (20 pts)

34 CFR 708.11(a): Reviewers look for information that shows the extent to which the applicant understands the state of knowledge and practice in the problem area at the center's mission. This section should demonstrate:

(1) The extent of the applicant's understanding of the mission of the proposed center;
(2) How the activities of the proposed center will contribute to the advancement of relevant theory and practice;
(3) The quality of plans to establish effective working relations with other organizations in educational research, development, and practice;
(4) The quality of the plans to address the problems of special populations and of both public and private institutions in terms of the mission of the proposed center; and
(5) The quality of long-range plans for developing an appropriate, coherent, and effective program of educational research, development, and dissemination.

Criterion 2. Institutional Capacity (15pts)

34 CFR 708.11(b): Reviewers look for information that shows the capabilities of the host institution to sustain a long-term, high-quality, and coherent program of research, development, and dissemination in the mission area, including:

(1) An appropriate organizational structure and commitment to provide the services of appropriate faculty or staff members from the applicant's organization;
(2) An appropriate mixture of scholarly and practitioner backgrounds in the project staff of the applicant;
(3) Past successes of the applicant in collaborating with individuals and organizations to conduct educational research and development;
(4) Structure and governance arrangements likely to provide appropriate direction, quality control, and cost effective management; and
(5) Availability of appropriate resources for the effective implementation of research and development activities.

Criterion 3. Plan of Operation (15)

34 CFR 708.11(c): Reviewers look for information that shows the quality of the plan of operation for the proposed center that include:

(1) The degree to which the plan for center management ensures proper and efficient administration of the project;
(2) The effectiveness of proposed strategies for providing national leadership within the center's mission;
(3) The extent to which the applicant shows promising strategy for disseminating center products, including the identification of intended audiences and reasonable timelines for dissemination;
(4) The adequacy of the applicant's plans to use its resources and personnel to achieve each objective; and
(5) The degree to which the research needs of both public and private elementary and secondary schools and institutions of higher education are addressed by the proposed research, if appropriate.

n-14

Criterion 4. Technical Soundness (25)

34 CFR 708.11(d): Reviewers look for information that shows the technical soundness of the proposed research. This information should demonstrate:

(1) The extent to which the applicant demonstrates a thorough knowledge of current research and development concepts, theories, and outcomes and relates these to the proposed activities and the mission of the center;
(2) The adequacy of the research design and methodologies to address the research questions posed; and
(3) Evidence that, where appropriate, the perspectives of a variety of disciplines are used.

Criterion 5. Quality of Key Personnel (15 pts)

34 CFR 708.11(e): Reviewers look for information that shows the qualifications of the key personnel who will be working on the project. This information includes:

CRITERIA

(1) The qualifications of the project director;
(2) The qualifications of each of the other key personnel to be used in the project; and
(3) The applicant's policy, as part of its nondiscriminatory employment practices, to ensure that its personnel are selected without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, age, or handicapping condition.

To determine personnel qualifications under paragraphs (e)(1) and (2) of this section, reviewers consider--

(i) Experience and training in fields related to the objectives of the project; and
(ii) Any other qualifications that pertain to the project.

Criterion 6. Budget and Cost Effectiveness (5 pts)

34 CFR 708.11(f): Reviewers look for information that shows that the project has an adequate budget and is cost effective. This information should demonstrate that:

(1) The budget for the project is adequate to support the project activities;
(2) The equipment and supplies that the applicant plans to use are adequate; and
(3) Costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives and activities of the project.

Criterion 7. Evaluation Plan (5 pts)

34 CFR 708.11(g): Reviewers look for information that shows the quality of the evaluation plan for the project, including the adequacy of:

(1) The peer review process for evaluating research instruments and products;
(2) The plan for advisory board evaluation of center research activities and resources;
(3) The methods which will be used to document the center's progress in relation to its objectives; and
(4) The methods which will be used to document the impact of the center's program on its target audiences.

B-1B

U. Georgia

Criterion 1. Mission and Strategy

Strengths:

The focus on improving the training of educational administrators and enhancing the capacity of professors of educational administration in universities to do useful research has the potential to make a contribution, because the poor quality of research in this area implies that improvements are needed. The page 12 conceptualization of what has been wrong with past research in educational administration is also useful.

Weaknesses:

The application emphasizes a RDDU (Utilization) framework, but it does not convincingly explain how the products of the Center's work will be made use of either in existing training programs or at the school building level. The application is weak in not providing specific, testable theoretical propositions that will guide the Center's work (aside from a theory of why past research has been weak).

Additional Comments:

Because the frameworks for this Center's work remain to be developed through RDAGs, RASAs, and conferences, research products will apparently be some time in coming. Although the proposal assumes that enlisting more women in cucational leadership roles, the roles of other "special populations" are not discussed.

5 Pts.
(20 Maximum)

B-2

U. Georgia

Criterion 2. Institutional Capacity

Strengths:

The University of Georgia has typical large university research support resources. The Consortium presumably has the potential to gain some degree of involvement and responsiveness from participating training institutions.

Letters of commitment, not interest.

Weaknesses:

It is not clear that ample physical space with actual FTE personnel will be involved. Educational administration practitioner but not quantitative research personnel are represented in the proposed Center. The project director does not have line authority over the other Center participants. Past leadership of this Consortium in ambitious programs of research and development is not documented in the application.

? McNamara
Haller
Hubert, etc?

Additional Comments:

4 Pts.
(15 Maximum)

B-3

U. Georgia

Criterion 3. Plan of Operation

Strengths:

Weaknesses: Instead of identifying research projects, "possibilities" for R&D linkages are suggested. This is not sufficiently specific. A Center as "an idea and process" rather than a place makes one doubt that a true Center will result. The organization chart is not reassuring. It shows functions reporting to a Center Director and lists activities under each function, but it does not display who will have responsibilities and where they will be located. The activities and work flow diagram undermines confidence in the prospect that useful research will be done. Doing research is six steps into the diagram. Dissemination and use of research are treated in a superficial way in the application's plan. Although there is a need to enhnace the capacity of educational administration programs in universities to conduct research, a remedial education program for university professors is not a national R&D center. Aspects of the activities are not fully defined (eg. NISL). Little in the proposal shows knowledge of research methods.

Additional Comments:

1 Pts.
(15 Maximum)

B-4

U. Georgia

Criterion 4. Technical Soundness

Strengths: The projects and methods are not cast in concrete, so flexibility would be possible. The proposal is clear (p. 31) that only research on how leadership affects the classroom is within the scope of the research agenda. (Much else in the proposal contradicts this clear statement, however. E.g., how are "new technology" or "teleconferencing" projects related to classroom outcomes?)

Weaknesses: The technical details are not specified, and there is little evidence shown that the proposer has the technical capacity to conduct an ambitious program or programs of research in this area. At p. 31, what designs will be used? It is not enough to know that there are design choices. "Possibilities for study" are listed instead of concrete plans for research. It is insufficient to explain that "quantitative designs will be used." Specifically what designs? How will schools be sampled? How many? What methods will be used? Some projects call for "intensive studies" but have fractions of FTE devoted to them.

Most first year start up activities are the sort of thing one expects to have been performed in preparing a proposal. The results of assessments of what research is needed should be reflected in the proposal, not anticipated as a result of a year's activity. A reviewer wants to learn from a proposal what topics/methods/ processes will be applied, not provided with assurances that these matters will be considered. Why develop SBM training rather than test existing programs? Could research not build on existing systems for implementation or evaluate the application of existing systems? The dissemination plan does not contain a convincing mechanism to get utilization. It is not plausible that (see p. 49) research skills and other matters can be conveyed in a 2 - 3 day meeting.

Additional Comments:

15 Pts.
(25 Maximum)

B-5

U. Georgia

Criterion 5. Quality of Key Personnel

Strengths:

The application shows anticipated involvement by people active in the educational administration field.

Weaknesses:

The application is weak in research personnel who will spend more than a small fraction of effort. The application shows many personnel with a small percentage of effort. No core of quality personnel will devote sufficient time to the Center according to the material presented in the application. But U. Georgia is contributing time for a Center Director

Additional Comments:

6 ~~5~~ Pts.
(15 Maximum)

B-6

U. Georgia

Criterion 6. Budget and Cost Effectiveness

Strengths:

The cap on indirect cost recovery by participants is an interesting approach to cost containment, although I noted no assurances from potential participants that they would/could waive indirect costs.

Weaknesses:

The large number of small FTE personnel undermines credibility. A center needs a core of personnel devoting substantial effort to be successful.

Interesting value judgment! (Bias!)

Additional Comments:

4 Pts.
(5 Maximum)

B-7

U. Georgia

Criterion 7. Evaluation Plan

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

It is not clear that the peer review process proposed would have teeth. How about traditional criteria for assessing the quality of research -- publications, citations? -

└ Why not review this, then, in the review of personnel in this proposal?

Additional Comments:

3 Pts.
(5 Maximum)

B-8

NOTES ON KEY STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF SPECIFIC R & D PROJECTS AND INSTITUTIONAL ACTIVITIES

At least thy projects call for "intensive" naturalistic observation or case studies at school sites, yet a collection of part-time personnel with insufficient effort to perform the work are whown.

The Dissemination/Use portion of the application does not show specifically how research products will influence either practice or training of education administrators.

Entire proposal specifies this, including pledge from Deans to USE the successful results.

SUMMARY COMMENTS ON PROPOSAL STRENGTHS:

Improving the capacity of educational administration faculty in colleges and universities to do research is a worthy goal, although it is not clear that this proposal provides a credible mechanism to accomplish that goal.

SUMMARY COMMENTS ON PROPOSAL WEAKNESSES:

The actual content of projects, methods, samples, and research designs -- including in some areas a delineation of the research priorities -- is left to the first year to work out. A credible scenarion for a Center is not created by a far-flung assemblage of part-time workers held together by long-distance communications and conferences.

KEY ISSUES FOR CLARIFICATION

Specifically, what research will be conducted; what specific designs, methods, analysis techniques will be used?

AREAS OF CONCERN

How can a Center Director at one university ~~administer a Center at another~~ and exercise line authority over a large collection of part-time faculty at ~~still~~ other universitites?

OFFICE OF RESEARCH
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TECHNICAL REVIEW FORM
RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT CENTERS PROGRAM
SCHOOL LEADERSHIP CENTER
(CFDA ANNOUNCEMENT NO. 84.117C-2)

APPLICANT: Southern Regional Consortium of Colleges of Education

REVIEWER: _____ DATE: 21 Sept 1988

CRITERIA: Institutional Operations (34 CFR 708.11)

EVALUATION FORM

CRITERIA	MAXIMUM SCORE	POINTS AWARDED	
		PRELIM.	FINAL
1. Mission and Strategy	20	5	
2. Institutional Capacity	15	5	
3. Plan of Operation	15	5	
4. Technical Soundness	25	5	
5. Quality of Key Personnel	15	5	
6. Budget and Cost Effectiveness	5	0	
7. Evaluation Plan	5	4	
	—		
TOTAL	100	29	

_____ ACCEPTABLE FOR FUNDING

_____ ACCEPTABLE FOR FUNDING WITH RESERVATIONS

xx
_____ NOT ACCEPTABLE FOR FUNDING

_____
Reviewer Signature

B-10

Criterion 1. Mission and Strategy

Strengths: Perception of mission seems good.

Weaknesses: Not sure strategy is good. If SRCCE connection has not worked in the past, why will it work now? Does not answer question. Strategy does not incorporate a vision of what is new or what could be new. Basically, seems to be to improve R&D — act as nucleus of improved "do what we have always done". Not bad, but not inspired.

Who said it hasn't

Certainly not a traditional center. The SRCCE, in fact, did NOT propose to do "what we have always done" -- just the opposite!

Additional Comments:

Reading of the rest of the proposal suggests that the authors really do not have much of a strategy. They really have not given much though to what ELRDC would do, do not propose a real center, do not have a full time person to run it, and do not propose to do business any differently from how the SRCCE has always done it.

Is this an attack on SRCCE?

Interesting Tunnel vision!

5

_____ Pts.
(20 Maximum)

B-12

Criterion 2. Institutional Capacity

Strengths:

None Noted.

Weaknesses:

They do not propose a "center" which is a place, and do not propose a product champion. In fact, they do not propose the University of Georgia as an institutional resource. The primary thing the U. of GA. is doing is contributing half the Director's time, some office space, and some other resources. The major organizational entity backing the proposal is the SRCCE. That is really not the way to mobilize really innovative approaches.

Interesting Bias! Does reader know of ECS, UCEA, AASA, NASA?, etc. and of the minimum productivity + impact of single-place centers in past

Additional Comments:

5
Pts.
(15 Maximum)

B-13

Criterion 3. Plan of Operation

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

It appears that the concept of operation is very much ad hoc. It appears that ELRDC is being "bent" to conform to the current MO of the SRCCE. In other words, they have an ongoing operation. They are saying that if DE will give them the money, they will figure out what to do with it. More is better.

Reading of the rest of the proposal indicates that it reflects very little real planning. The Plan of Operation thus is a plan to figure out what to do in the second through fifth years of the operation. That hardly seems appropriate at this time.

Additional Comments:

5

_____ Pts.
(15 Maximum)

B-14

Criterion 4. Technical Soundness

Strengths: None noted.

For the first three Work Agenda Areas, the primary activity for the first year appeared to be to figure out what to do next. So the first year plan for ELRDC is a plan for how to develop a plan for four more years of work, more or less. There is a bit more detail on the RASAs, but these may or may not be consistent to what would develop during the first year of planning work in any integrated way.

Additional Comments:

5

_____ Pts.
(25 Maximum)

B-15

Criterion 5. Quality of Key Personnel

Strengths:

Weaknesses: The proposal does not advance anyone of apparent national stature, with perhaps one exception who certainly enjoys regional stature but maybe no more. Stature in this sense, of course, is probably not perfectly predictive of subsequent research excellence, but certainly ought to be suggestive. A further problem is that there was very little in the way of demonstration of who among the key personnel would be doing what in the way of key work, perhaps because the SRCCE does not yet know what the key work would be.

In what field?

Additional Comments:

5

_____ Pts.
(15 Maximum)

B-16

Criterion 6. Budget and Cost Effectiveness

Strengths:

Weaknesses: The SRCCE has managed to piecemeal the budget to a huge number of tiny recipients. It is extremely difficult to justify this kind of approach. It cannot be programmatic, and can only waste the funding.

Additional Comments:

Interesting — No comment on the commitment

0 Pts.
(5 Maximum)

B-17

Criterion 7. Evaluation Plan

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Seems standard fare. Formative (look at it and see how it looks) and Summative (survey of value and use of products). This at least gets to user comment.

Additional Comments:

4 Pts.
(5 Maximum)

B-18

Southern REgional Consortium of Colleges of Education (SRCCE)

Proposes a Center: Education Leadership Research and Development Center (ELRDC)

MISSION AND STRATEGY

Discards notion of leader as superman. Usefully leads from the construct of leadership itself to the notion of organizational phenomena (context) which influence outcomes as well. Views mission as advancing knowledge of:

- the conditions, ways and extent to whi9ch leadership, as distinct from management, is a factor in determining the quantity and quality of teaching and learning
- the curricula and experiences most likely to foster the development of rpoductive school leaders and managers.

Gently refutes sense that leadership is diametrically opposed to ~~leadership~~ management.

Brings in importance of considering gender in the overall center set of goals.

Strategy: Notes use of Research, Development, Dissemination, Utilization (RDDU) approach. Notes also the value of SRCCE as a basis for dissemination of Center work. This is a strength. Writers also note emphasis on useful products which are disseminated to practitioners.

Major objectives:

- an orgznizing theme or framework to guide work: leadership context-- intervening variabvles and processes — education outcomes
- attention to important research agendas
- pattern for long-term cooperation between reesearchers and practitioners
  studying problems of practice of education leadership in schools
- increasing pool of contributing researchers through training and support
- improving preparation programs for education leaders.

Note intention to field test products., and then to share them with others e.g., education laboratories.

Stress on current practice and on anticipa5tion of future needs.

- Current state of the art not good. poorly focused current research in the field, naive use of statistics. Superficial methjodologies. ELRDC will aim at improving research practices.
- Will use multi-disciplinary teams to improve research methodologies.
- Will involve complementary disciplines also. Include: think tank teams, research design and advisory groups, research agenda study area groups.
- Preparation programs are poor.
  - Will examine current preparation programs
  - Will look at schools whe5re "it is working now."
  - Comments that current proposals for improvement echo those of a generation ago by Culbertson et al. (Inability to imploement

those changes then suggests new approaches are needed.)

Note that the authors include a table about current criticisms of Ed admin. and ELRDC steps proposed to avoid or remedy the criticisms.

COMMENT ON STRATEGY: Perception of mission seems good. Not sure strategy is good. If SRCCE connection has not worked in the past, why will it work now? Does not answer question. Strategy does not incorporate a vision of what is new or what could be new. Basically, seems to be to improve R&D — act as nucleus of improved "do what we have always done". Not bad, but not inspired.

PLAN OF OPERATION

Comments that the center (because of the large university overhead rates) will be more an idea and a process than a place. ELRDC will be "dispersed". (But where money goes, overhead also goes. This will not avoid university overhead rates if university staff are paid money.)

Cites a number of efforts and initiatives now ongoing.

- 16 systems in 8 st ates currently working on "Time for Results"
- Consortium of systems (partly UNISYS sponsored) working on site-based management
- Directors of the LEAD projects now working together.
- Secretary's recognition Program. Exemplary schools.

Contains in Figure 1 proposed organization. It is clear from the chart that the intention is to ad hoc the work. The Principal Investigator will be the Dean of the College of Education of the University of Georgia. Director will be Dr. Fred D. Carver, with an associate and an assistant director. Latter positions will be full-time templorary, initially. (QUESTION: WHO IS THE PRODUCT CHAMPION?) Wi!l ahve a national advisory panel, and an administrative policy board.

Activities and work flow shown in Figure 2. The concept is of the ELRDC as a clearing house and idea generator??

COMMENT: It appears that the concept of operaiton is very much ad hoc. It appears that ELRDC is being "bent" to conform to the current MO of the SRCCE. In other words, they have an ongoing operation. They are saying that if DE will give them the money, they will figure out what to do with it. More is better.

TECHNICAL SOUNDNESS

Work Agenda Area 1: Refining the mission and program direction. A st rategy and framework for research on school leadership.

One Center strategy ... leadership by setting the research ag enda through collaboration, coordinating research efforts of researchers who are geographically decentralized ... and influencing practice directly through dissemination of syntheses of multiple models for school leadership and indirectly through targeted ongoing renewal of professors ...

An initial activity is to refine and sharpen the ELRDC mission and strategies

RASAs clearly stated for year 1.!

through an invitational working conference. (IN OTHER WORDS, WE DON'T KNOW WHAT WE ARE GOING TO DO, BUT WE PROPOSE TO FIND OUT THIS WAY.)

The writer discusses research methods to be used, e.g., will use case studies during first two years. (BUT DOES NOT DESCRIBE WHAT THE RESEARCH ISSUES ARE.)

COMMENT: THE FIRST YEAR OR SO, IN THIS AREA, IS TO BE SPENT DEVELOPING THE ELRDC AGENDA. THIS IS GRUESOME.

Work Agenda Area 2: Leadership contexts and education outcomes. Status and review of major education leadership research.

Proposes to integrate information about the field of edcuation leadership. Will provide the missing conceptual structure and consistency, and prioritize areas of future R&D needs, and develop an agenda. The area will include leadership context and outcomes. Leadership context is broken into environmental (e.g., international, national, regional, state, and community) and organizational (district, school, classroom). Thgere is also individual context (characteristics of individuals who occupy leadership positions).

Outcomes are performance, at titudinal, behavioral.

Simple model in Figure 3 and on p. 31: "... will help st aff plan a longitudinal research agenda for the Center." IN OTHER WORDS, THE CENTER DOES NOT HAVE ONE NOW.

see RFP pp 1-8

COMMENT: THE MAJOR TASK FOR THIS AREA DOR THE FIRST YEAR IS TO REVIEW THE LITERATURE AND DEVELOP THE LONG-RANGE ELRDC RESEARCH AGENDA. IT IS A CONFESSION THAT THE WRITER DOES NOT REALLY HAVE AN INTEGRATED UNDERSTANDING OF THE LITERATURE NOW, AND THAT ELRDC DOES NOT HAVE A RESEARCH AGENDA.

Work Agenda Area 3: Preparation progrms.

First step: synthesize information on preparation programs as a basis for planning, determining needed research, and for the development of a few model programs.

Current trends:

- Internship programs. Several new approaches (based on existing new programs) are mentioned.
- New technology in preparation program delivery. e.g., interactive video. (Note: This is the first piece of work that is specified in the proposal. Memphis State University will prepare one int eractive video production per academic year.)

The main output for the area is the identification of 2-4 preparation program models which will be implemented in year 2.

COMMENT: AGAIN, THE MAIN EFFORT IN YEAR ONE IS FIGURING OUT WHAT TO DO NEXT. — No, How!

Work Agenda area 4: Research Agenda Study Areas (RASAs) for special projects.

RASA: Leadership contexts and site-based management. Proposes qualitative and

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quantitative research designs . (Discussion of research methods in general, and not of specific research to be undertaken) The proposal is to develop a training package which will aid implementing site-bvased management (SBM). In Stage one, three pbulic and private local schools (where?) will be enrolled and results observed. In State Two, three additional public and privatre sites will be selected as controls. Will enter SBM, but no training. Stage 3 is analysis of data.

RASA: Assessment, placement and professional growth of school leaders. Proposes use of the Management Profile which probes how s/he fulfills six management functions and three leadership roles on the job. First year: use MP with six building administrators, and conduct "... intensive naturalistic studies in those principals' schools to examine the effects of their leadership styles ons chool operations and outcomes." Second year: more of the same , etc.

RASA: Teleconferencing research, devdelopment, and dissemination (OSU). In second year, ELRDC will sponsor teleconference on educational leaderhsip.

RASA Gender influences in education administration for women administrators. Seems to be largely an effort to find out what female leader behavior is. (Rather than looking at situational leadership requirements, they are looking to see how women differ from men, and to determine which is more effective. The basic premise is that there are biological differences which predispose to immutable behavioral differences.)

Lists research staff.

RASA: Problems of Practice. Work with NASSP, NAESP, NSDC to obtain lists of practitioner perceived problems in administering schools. Problem identification and refinement will be one first year product of ELRDC effort.

RASA Possible future study areas. An area to find out future efforts to undertake. Exmaples:

- How does education leade5rship respond to policy mandates?
- Intgernational Education Leadership study
- Leadership contexts in schools initiating innovative patterns of education.

COMMENT: THE RASA AREA CONSISTS OF A LOOSE COALITION OF WHAT SEEMS TO BE OFF-THE-CUFF WORK. NO CLEAR PLANS.

Work Agenda Area 5: Dissemination. Contains a long discussion of effective communications and their attributes. The proposal contains a laundry list of possible ways.

COMMENT: THERE IS NO WORKED OUT AND WELL-UNDERSTOOD DISSEMINATION PLAN. THEIR PLAN IS TO USE THE SAME OLD MEANS AS THE SRCCE DOES. use by IHE's!

PERSONNEL

There is no full time person. Thge director is half-time, as are the interim administration positions. Also, the vitae do not show the proposed staff to be outstanding. (And isn't Carver's an obsolete Vitae? Doesn't show him at

EVALUATION PLAN. Seems standard fare. Formative (look at it and see how it looks) and Summative (survey of value and use of products). This at least gets to user comment.

Budget. Were able to spread out a million. (?) Commitment! actually 2 mil.